



# K A N S A S

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KATHLEEN SEBELIUS, GOVERNOR

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## **Sebelius appoints Jennings to serve as JJA commissioner** *Jennings brings three decades of law enforcement experience to the post*

Citing his extensive law enforcement experience, Governor Kathleen Sebelius today announced her appointment of J. Russell Jennings as commissioner of the Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority.

"Russ brings a unique perspective through his experience as a law enforcement officer, magistrate judge, and juvenile detention center director. His insight on how we can best help juvenile offenders make the right decisions in their lives and become productive, law-abiding adults will be a great asset as he accepts this new challenge," Sebelius said.

Jennings, Lakin, began his career in law enforcement thirty years ago as Kearny County Deputy Sheriff. Jennings became deputy sheriff in 1977, and was named undersheriff in 1979, before later being appointed district magistrate judge for Kearny County. In 1994, Jennings became director of the Southwest Regional Juvenile Detention Center in Garden City. He recently resigned from that position to serve as JJA Commissioner.

Differing from adult correction programs, the JJA focuses on partnerships with diversion programs to intervene early in a young person's life. Through such cooperation, young offenders gain the skills and perspective needed to be contributing members of society. Sebelius said that Russell's expertise as a community leader and building community partnerships will be useful in his new role.

Jennings replaces Don Jordan who was appointed secretary of the Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services in December. Jennings assumes his new position on February 26.

Jennings and his wife of 30 years, Judy, a school teacher, have four children: Joseph, Topeka; James, a sophomore at Washburn University; and Julie and Jodi, both students at Lakin High School.

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